

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS FOR

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Project

ISSUING OFFICE

**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Human Services
Bureau of Procurement and Contract Management
Room 832 Health and Welfare Building
625 Forster Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120**

RFA NUMBER

16-23

DATE OF ISSUANCE

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Commonwealth will make every effort to adhere to the following schedule:

Activity	Responsibility	Date
Deadline to submit questions via email to RA-PWRFAQUESTIONS@PA.GOV	Potential Applicants	June 29, 2023 12:00:00 PM EST
Answers to Potential Applicant questions posted to the Department of General Services (“DGS”) website at http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us/Search.aspx no later than this date.	DHS	July 10, 2023
Please monitor website for all communications regarding the Request for Applications.	Potential Applicants	Ongoing
Application must be received by the Issuing Office at RA-PWRFAQUESTIONS@PA.GOV as provided in Part I, Sections I-11 and I-12.A.	Applicants	July 25, 2023 12:00:00 PM EST

PART I

GENERAL INFORMATION

- I-1. Purpose.** This Request for Applications (“RFA”) provides to nonprofit organizations interested in submitting applications for the subject procurement (“Applicants”) sufficient information to enable them to prepare and submit applications for the Department of Human Services’ (“Department” or “DHS”) consideration on behalf of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (“Commonwealth”) to satisfy a need for promoting awareness of and participation in the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (“SNAP”) Participation Project (“Project”)**. This RFA contains instructions governing the requested applications, including the requirements for the information and material to be included; a description of the service to be provided; requirements that Applicants must meet to be eligible for consideration; general evaluation criteria; and other requirements specific to this RFA.
- I-2. Issuing Office.** The Department’s Office of Administration, Bureau of Procurement and Contract Management (“Issuing Office”) has issued this RFA on behalf of the Commonwealth. The sole point of contact in the Commonwealth for this RFA shall be Teresa Allen, RA-PWRFAQUESTIONS@PA.GOV, the Issuing Officer for this RFA. Please refer all inquiries to the Issuing Officer.
- I-3. Overview of Project.** The DHS, Office of Income Maintenance (“OIM”) is committed to work in partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (“FNS”) and nonprofit community and faith based organizations (“CBOs”) to provide outreach to residents of Pennsylvania that will inform potentially eligible individuals of SNAP, provide application assistance for potentially eligible individuals who wish to apply for SNAP, increase the number of individuals actively receiving SNAP (also called SNAP participation) by removing common barriers to application approval, increase public awareness of SNAP, and decrease public stigma regarding SNAP. The mission of SNAP is to promote the general welfare and to safeguard the health and well-being of Americans by raising levels of nutrition among low-income households, ultimately improving nutrition and health. SNAP benefits are an important support as families make the transition from public support to full self-sufficiency.

The Department has structured the services required by this RFA into service regions as identified in **Appendix D**. The Department intends to award at least one grant in each service region and may use any remaining funds for additional grants within any region. Applicants should identify on the cover sheet which region and which county or counties within the region they will serve as part of their application. **Applicants should submit only one application per region.**

I-4. Objectives.

A. General.

The objective of this RFA is to award grant funding to applicants that will:

1. Provide program information and application assistance to individuals or households that are potentially eligible for SNAP but not currently participating in the program, including tracking application outcomes for households assisted and providing follow-up support as necessary.
2. Increase public awareness and knowledge about SNAP.

3. Encourage long-term community-based collaborations that enhance SNAP participation in and through COMPASS.
4. The Department is seeking Applicants to develop projects that provide for the continuation of SNAP outreach efforts within the community beyond the term of the grant.

B. Specific.

Through the SNAP Participation Project, DHS's specific objectives are to:

1. Increase the number of applications received for SNAP, with a focus on individuals in the Priority Populations outlined by FNS in [FY 2023 Priority Areas for State Outreach Plans](#). The Priority Populations may be revised annually and applicants should anticipate adjusting services as needed.

These populations currently include:

- Elderly (age 60 or older)
 - Students of higher education
 - Immigrant communities and mixed-status families
 - Veterans
 - Racial minorities (to promote racial equity);
2. Increase participation in SNAP, including helping applicants gather necessary documentation with the goal of reducing the number of applications rejected for missing or incomplete information;
 3. Increase public awareness and knowledge of SNAP;
 4. Follow the [FNS Guidance](#) on SNAP Outreach; and
 5. Encourage long-term community-based collaborations that enhance participation and enrollment assistance activities using the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Application for Social Services ("COMPASS").

COMPASS allows individuals, medical providers, and community-based organizations to submit applications for Cash Assistance, SNAP, and healthcare programs online through the COMPASS website (<http://www.compass.state.pa.us/>).

I-5. Method of Award. Applicants may submit applications for one, all, or any combination of service regions. Applicants must submit a separate application (consisting of Technical) for each service region for which it seeks to apply. Applicants should submit only one application per service region. After evaluation of applications, if it is determined to be in the Commonwealth's best interest, the Commonwealth may request Applicants to submit integrated solutions for any combination of service regions. If an applicant is awarded a grant in more than one region, the Department may elect to combine into a single grant for that applicant. The Department will evaluate all applications separately, and will award agreements as described in **Part II, Section II-6**.

I-6. Type of Agreement. The Department intends to award multiple agreements as the result of this RFA. If the Department enters into agreements, they will be cost reimbursement agreements consisting of the **Grant Agreement** attached to this RFA as **Appendix E**, and the attached **Payment Provisions (Rider 1)**, **Standard Grant Terms and Conditions (Rider 4)**, the **DHS Addendum to the Standard Grant Terms and Conditions (Rider 5)** and its attachments (**Attachments A, L, and W**). **Rider 2, Work**

Statement, will consist of this RFA and the selected Application, and **Rider 3, Budget**, will consist of the selected Applicant's cost submittal.

- I-7. Rejection of Applications.** The Department, in its sole and complete discretion, may reject any application received as a result of this RFA.
- I-8. Incurring Costs.** The Commonwealth and the Department are not liable for any costs an Applicant incurs in the preparation and submission of its application, in participating in the RFA process, or in anticipation of agreement award.
- I-9. Questions & Answers.** If an Applicant has questions regarding this RFA, the Applicant must submit the questions by email (**with the subject line "RFA 16-23 Question"**) to the Issuing Officer named in **Part I, Section I-2** of this RFA. If the Applicant has questions, they must be submitted as they arise via email but **no later than** the date stated in the Calendar of Events. The Applicant shall not attempt to contact the Issuing Officer by any other means.

When questions are submitted after the date specified in the Calendar of Events, the Issuing Officer *may* respond to questions of an administrative nature by directing the questioning Applicant to specific provisions in the RFA. If the Department decides to respond to a non-administrative question *after* the date for receipt of questions, DHS will provide the answer to all Applicants through an addendum.

All questions and responses will be posted on the Department of General Services ("DGS") website and are considered as an addendum to, and part of, this RFA in accordance with RFA **Part I, Section I-10** of this RFA.

- I-10. Addenda to the RFA.** If the Department deems it necessary to revise any part of this RFA before the application response date, the Department will post an addendum to eMarketplace at <http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us/Search.aspx>. It is the Applicant's responsibility to periodically check the website for any new information or addenda to the RFA. The Department shall not be bound by any verbal information nor shall it be bound by any written information that is not either contained within the RFA or formally issues as an addendum.
- I-11. Response Date.** To be considered for selection, Applicants must submit electronic copies of their applications to the Issuing Office and the Issuing Office must receive the applications **no later than** the date and time specified in the Calendar of Events. Electronic copies of applications must be submitted to RA-PWRFAQUESTIONS@PA.GOV. Applicants should allow sufficient time for electronic submission and receipt of their applications. The Department will **not** accept hard copy applications or applications via facsimile transmission. **The Department will reject late applications or portions of applications.** "Late" includes, but is not limited to, applications which are received within a minute or less after the due date and time, as well as, applications that are received several hours or days after the due date and time.
- I-12. Application Requirements.**
- A. Application Submission:** To be considered, Applicants should submit a complete response to this RFA to the Issuing Office, using the format provided in **Part I, Section I-12.B**, providing **one copy of the Technical Submittal**, via email to RA-PWRFAQUESTIONS@PA.GOV. The subject line of the email must specify "RFA #16-23 Application". Email attachments are limited to 10 MB, cumulatively, per email, and files may not be sent in any compressed format. Any part of the application or its attachments over that limit must be sent via separate emails, with each labeled "RFA

#16-23 Application Part X of Y” (total number of emails). DHS will not accept encrypted email for the application submission.

The electronic response must be in Microsoft Office or Microsoft Office-compatible format including Adobe Acrobat .pdf files, with any spreadsheets in Microsoft Excel (including, but not limited to Rider 3- Budget). If an Applicant designates information as confidential or proprietary or trade secret protected in accordance with **Part I, Section I-18**, the Applicant must also include one redacted version of the Technical Submittal. Applicants may not lock or protect any cells or tabs.

Applicants shall make no other distribution of its application to any other Applicant or Commonwealth official or Commonwealth consultant. Each application page should be numbered for ease of reference. An official authorized to bind the Applicant to its provisions must sign the application. If the official signs the **Application Cover Sheet (Appendix A** to this RFA) and the Application Cover Sheet is attached to the Applicant’s application, the requirement will be met. For this RFA, the application must remain valid for **120** days or until an agreement is fully executed. If the Department selects the Applicant’s application for award, the contents of the selected Applicant’s application will become, except to the extent the contents are changed through Best and Final Offers or negotiations, contractual obligations.

Each Applicant submitting an application specifically waives the ability to withdraw or modify it, except that the Applicant may withdraw its application by written notice and submitting it to RA-PWRFAQUESTIONS@PA.GOV prior to the date and time specified in the Calendar of Events of when applications are due. An Applicant may modify its submitted application prior to the exact hour and date set for application receipt only by submitting a new application or modification that complies with the RFA requirements.

B. Application Format: Applicants should submit their applications in the format, including heading descriptions, outlined below. To be considered, the application should respond to all application requirements. Applicants should provide any other information thought to be relevant, but not applicable to the enumerated categories, as an appendix to the application. Applicants may submit applications for more than one service region; however, each service region must be submitted as a separate application and Applicants may only submit one application per service region. Each application shall consist of the following submittal.

1. Technical Submittal:

a. Applicants should arrange their responses as outlined below and should consider the email attachment file size limitations included in **Section I-12.A** for file contents. The Technical Submittal shall include the following sections:

- Application Cover Sheet
- Table of Contents
- Statement of the Project
- Qualifications
- Work Plan
- Requirements
- Project Narrative
- Reports & Project Control
- Cost Submittal

- b. Complete, sign and include **Attachment L, Lobbying Certification** and if applicable, the **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**.
- c. Complete and include **Appendix C, Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act Sub-Recipient Data Sheet**.
- d. Complete and include **Attachment W, Worker Protection and Investment Certification Form**.

Applications must adhere to the following format:

- a. Pages must be 8.5 by 11 inches with right and left margins of one inch.
- b. Must use Arial or Times New Roman font with a type size of 12, single spaced.
- c. Section headings, shown in this **Part I, Section I-12**, SHOULD be used.
- d. Include a page number and identification of the Applicant in the page footer of each page.
- e. Specifically reference materials provided in any appendix by page numbers in the body of the application.
- f. Exceptions for paper and font size are permissible for project schedule (Microsoft Project) or for graphical exhibits and material in appendices.

The Department may request additional information which, in the Department's opinion, is necessary to verify that the Applicant's competence, number of qualified employees, business organization, and financial resources are adequate to perform according to the RFA.

The Department may make investigations as deemed necessary to determine the ability of the Applicant to perform the Project, and the Applicant shall furnish to the Issuing Office all requested information and data. The Department may reject any application if the evidence submitted by, or investigation of, such Applicant fails to satisfy the Department that such Applicant is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the RFA and to complete the Project as specified.

- I-13. Economy of Preparation.** Applicants should prepare applications simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the Applicant's ability to meet the requirements of the RFA.
- I-14. Alternate Applications.** The Department has identified the basic approach to meeting its requirements, allowing Applicants to be creative and propose their best solution to meeting these requirements. The Department will not accept alternate applications.
- I-15. Discussions for Clarifications and Negotiations.** Applicants may be required to make an oral or written clarification of their applications, or both, to the Department to ensure thorough mutual understanding and Applicant responsiveness to the solicitation requirements. The Department will initiate requests for clarifications. Clarifications may occur at any stage of the evaluation and selection process prior to the award of an agreement.

The Department, in its sole discretion, may undertake negotiations with Applicants whose applications, shown them to be qualified, responsible, and capable of performing the Project. Negotiations may occur at any stage of the evaluation and selection process prior to the award of an agreement.

- I-16. Oral or Written Presentations.** Applicants may be required to make an oral or written presentation of their applications to the Department to demonstrate an Applicant's capabilities and ability to provide the services required in the RFA. The Department will initiate requests for presentations; and for oral presentations, may include a request that key personnel be present. The oral presentation will be held in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Presentations may be requested at any stage of the evaluation and selection process prior to the award of the grant agreement.

I-17. Prime Applicant Responsibilities. The Department will require the Applicant assume responsibility for all services offered in its application whether it produces them itself or by sub-grant. The Department will consider the selected Applicant to be the sole point of contact for all agreement matters.

I-18. Application Contents.

A. Confidential Information. The Commonwealth does not require, confidential proprietary information or trade secrets be included as part of Applicants' submissions. Except as provided, Applicants should not label applications as confidential or proprietary or trade secret protected. Any Applicant who determines that it must divulge such information as part of its application must submit the signed written statement described in Subsection C below and must provide a redacted version of its application in accordance with **Part I, Section I-12.A**, which removes only the confidential proprietary information and trade secrets, for required public disclosure purposes.

B. Commonwealth Use. All material submitted with the application shall be the property of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth has the right to use any or all ideas not protected by intellectual property rights that are presented in any application regardless of whether the application becomes part of an agreement. Notwithstanding any Applicant copyright designations contained on applications, the Commonwealth shall have the right to make copies and distribute applications internally and to comply with public record or other disclosure requirements under the provisions of any Commonwealth or United States statute or regulation, or rule or order of any court of competent jurisdiction.

C. Public Disclosure. After the award of a grant, all applications are subject to disclosure in response to a request for public records made under the Pennsylvania Right-to-Know-Law, 65 P.S. § 67.101, et seq. If an application contains confidential proprietary information or trade secrets, the Applicant must provide a signed written statement to this effect with the submission in accordance with 65 P.S. § 67.707(b) for the information to be considered exempt under 65 P.S. § 67.708(b)(11) from public records requests. Refer to **Appendix B** of the RFA for a **Trade Secret Confidential Proprietary Information Notice Form** that may be utilized as the signed written statement

I-19. Best and Final Offers ("BAFO").

A. While not required, the Department may conduct discussions with Applicants for the purpose of obtaining BAFOs. To obtain BAFOs, the Department may do one or more of the following, in any combination and order:

1. Schedule oral presentations;
2. Request revised applications; and
3. Enter into pre-selection negotiations.

B. The following Applicants will **not** be invited by the Department to submit a BAFO:

1. Those Applicants, which the Department has determined to be not responsible in accordance with **Part II, Section II-5** of this RFA or whose applications the Department has determined to not be responsive in accordance with **Part II, Section II-1** of this RFA.

2. Those Applicants, which the Department has determined from the submitted information, do not possess the experience or qualifications to ensure good faith performance of the grant agreement.
3. Those Applicants whose raw score for their Technical Submittal is less than 75% of the total amount of raw technical points allotted to the technical criterion.

The Department may further limit participation in the BAFO process to those remaining responsible Applicants that the Department has, within its discretion, determined to be within the top competitive range of responsive applications.

- C. The Evaluation Criteria found in **Part II, Section II-4**, shall also be used to evaluate the BAFOs.
- D. Price reductions offered shall have no effect upon the Applicant's Technical Submittal.
- E. The Department, in its sole discretion, also may undertake negotiations with Applicants whose applications, in the judgement of DHS, show them to be qualified, responsible, and capable of performing the Project.

I-20. News Releases. Applicants shall not issue news releases, Internet postings, advertisements or any other public communications pertaining to this Project without prior written approval of the Department, and then only in coordination with the Department.

I-21. Restriction of Contact. From the issue date of this RFA until the Department selects application(s) for award for each service region, the Issuing Officer is the sole point of contact concerning this RFA. Any violation of this condition may be cause for the Department to reject the offending Applicant's application. If the Department later discovers that the Applicant has engaged in any violations of this condition, the Department may reject the offending Applicant's application or rescind its grant agreement. Applicants shall not distribute any part of their applications beyond the Issuing Office. An Applicant who shares information contained in its application with other Commonwealth personnel or consultants or competing Applicant personnel may be disqualified.

I-22. Department Participation. The selected Applicant shall provide all services, supplies, facilities, and other support necessary to complete the identified work, except as otherwise provided in **Part I, Section I-22**. The Department will assign a Grant Administrator to manage the administration and monitoring of the agreements resulting from this RFA. The Grant Administrator will be the selected Applicant's primary contact and resource for issues and questions related to the Project as it pertains to the services and scope of work described in this RFA. Questions or communication that need to be directed to FNS, as well as any general SNAP Outreach questions must go through the Grant Administrator.

I-23. Term of Agreement. The term of the agreement(s) will commence on January 1, 2024 ("Effective Date") and will end September 30, 2024. Subject to the performance of a selected Applicant and other considerations, the Department may extend the agreement(s) on the same terms and conditions for up to four one-year periods. The selected Applicant(s) shall not start the performance of any work prior to the Effective Date of the agreement and the Commonwealth shall not be liable to pay the selected Applicant(s) for any service or work performed or expenses incurred before the Effective Date.

I-24. Applicant's Representations and Authorizations. By submitting its application, each Applicant understands, represents, and acknowledges that:

- A.** All Applicant's information and representations in the application are material and important, and the Department will rely upon its contents in awarding the agreement. The Commonwealth may treat any misstatement, omission or misrepresentation as fraudulent concealment of the true facts relating to the application, punishable pursuant to 18 Pa. C.S. § 4904.
- B.** The Applicant has arrived at the price(s) and amounts in its application independently and without consultation, communication, or agreement with any other Applicant or potential Applicant.
- C.** The Applicant has not disclosed the price(s), the amount of the application, nor the approximate price(s) or amount(s) of its application to any other firm or person who is an Applicant or potential applicant, and the Applicant shall not disclose any of these items on or before the application submission deadline specified in the Calendar of Events.
- D.** The Applicant has not attempted, nor will it attempt, to induce any firm or person to refrain from submitting an application, or to submit an application higher than its application, or to submit any intentionally high or noncompetitive application or other form of complementary application.
- E.** The Applicant makes its application in good faith and not pursuant to any agreement or discussion with, or inducement from, any firm or person to submit a complementary or other noncompetitive application.
- F.** To the best knowledge of the person signing the application for the Applicant, the Applicant, its affiliates, subsidiaries, officers, directors, and employees are not currently under investigation by any governmental agency and have not in the last **four** years been convicted or found liable for any act prohibited by State or Federal law in any jurisdiction, involving conspiracy or collusion with respect to bidding or proposing on any public contract, except as the Applicant has disclosed in its application.
- G.** To the best of the knowledge of the person signing the application for the Applicant and except as the Applicant has otherwise disclosed in its application, the Applicant has no outstanding, delinquent obligations to the Commonwealth including, but not limited to, any state tax liability not being contested on appeal.
- H.** The Applicant is not currently under suspension or debarment by the Commonwealth and has not been precluded from participation in any federally funded health care program by any other state or the federal government, and if the Applicant cannot so certify, then it shall submit along with its application a written explanation of why it cannot make such certification.
- I.** The Applicant has not made, under separate agreement with the Department, any recommendations to the Department concerning the need for the services or the specifications for the services described in the application.
- J.** Each Applicant, by submitting its application, authorizes Commonwealth agencies to release to the Department information concerning the Applicant's Pennsylvania taxes, unemployment compensation and workers' compensation liabilities.
- K.** Until the selected Applicant receives a fully executed and approved written agreement from the Issuing Office, no legal and valid agreement exists, in law or in equity, and the Applicant shall not begin to perform.

L. The Applicant is not currently engaged and will not during the duration of the agreement engage, in a boycott of a person or an entity based in or doing business with a jurisdiction that the Commonwealth is not prohibited by Congressional statute from engaging in trade or commerce.

I-25. Notification of Selection. The Department will notify all Applicants in writing of the Applicant(s) selected for negotiations after the Department has determined, taking into consideration all evaluation factors, the applications that are the most advantageous to the Department.

I-26. Use of Electronic Versions of this RFA. This RFA is being made available by electronic means. If an Applicant electronically accepts the RFA, the Applicant accepts full responsibility to ensure that no changes are made to the RFA. If a conflict arises between a version of the RFA in the Applicant's possession and the Issuing Office's version of the RFA, the Issuing Office's version shall govern.

PART II

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

II-1. Mandatory Responsiveness Requirements. To be eligible for selection, the following must be in compliance:

- A. The application must be timely received from Applicant (see **Part I, Section I-11**);
- B. The application must be properly signed by the Applicant (see **Part I, Section I-12.A**); and
- C. The Applicant must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

II-2. Technical Nonconforming Applications. The three Mandatory Responsiveness Requirements set forth in **Section II-1** are the only RFA requirements that the Commonwealth will consider to be *non-waivable*. The Department may, in its sole discretion, (1) waive any other technical or immaterial nonconformities in an Applicant's application, (2) allow the Applicant to cure the nonconformity, or (3) consider the nonconformity in the scoring of the application.

II-3. Evaluation. The Department has selected a committee of qualified personnel to review and evaluate the Technical Submittals of the timely submitted applications that are eligible for selection. The evaluation committee will evaluate Applications for each region separately. The Department will provide written notice of its selection for negotiations the responsible Applicants whose applications are determined to be the most advantageous to the Commonwealth for each region as determined by the Department after taking into consideration all evaluation factors.

II-4. Evaluation Criteria. The following criteria will be used in evaluating each application:

Technical: The Department has established the weight for the Technical criterion as **100%** of the total points. Evaluation will be based upon the following: Soundness of Approach, Applicant Qualifications, Personnel Qualifications, Cost, and Understanding the Project.

- **Soundness of Approach.** This includes, but is not limited to, the Applicant's technical approach for completion of all services by this RFA, if it is responsive to all requirements of the RFA and if it meets the Project's objectives.
- **Applicant Qualifications.** This includes, but is not limited to, the ability of the Applicant to meet the terms of the RFA, including the time constraints involved with the Project and the quality, relevancy, and recentness of projects completed. This also includes the Applicant's ability to undertake a Project of this size.
- **Personnel Qualifications.** This includes, but is not limited to, the competence and sufficiency of the personnel and staff who would be assigned to the Project by the Applicant.
- **Cost.** This refers to the feasibility of the Applicant's Budget Submittal, and whether the proposed grant activities are commensurate with the budget. The availability of private match funds provided by the Applicant to be put toward the Federal 50% reimbursement will also be considered.

- **Understanding the Project.** This includes the Applicant's understanding of Commonwealth's needs that generated the RFA, the objectives of the RFA, and of the nature and scope of the work involved.

The final Technical scores are determined by giving the maximum number of technical points available to the application with the highest raw technical score. The remaining applications are rated by applying the formula located at:

https://www.dgs.pa.gov/Materials-Services-Procurement/Procurement-Resources/Pages/RFP_SCORING_FORMULA.aspx

II-5. Applicant Responsibility. To be responsible, an Applicant must submit a responsive application and possess the capability to fully perform the agreement requirements in all respects and the integrity and reliability for the good faith performance of the agreement. For an Applicant to be considered responsible for this RFA and eligible for selection for BAFO and selection for negotiations, the total score for the Technical Submittal of the application must be greater than or equal to **75%** of the **available raw technical points**

II-6. Final Ranking and Award.

- A.** After any BAFO process is conducted, the Issuing Office will combine the evaluation committee's final technical scores and the final cost scores, in accordance with the relative weights assigned to these areas as set forth in this **Part II-4**.
- B.** The Issuing Office will rank responsible Applicants within each service region according to the total overall score assigned to each, in descending order.
- C.** The Department will award an agreement to the responsible Applicant with the highest-scoring Application within each service region. The Department intends to award at least one agreement in each service region for award. If the Department has funds remaining after making the initial award, the Department may award remaining funds to as many of the next highest-scoring, qualified Applicant(s) as possible.
- D.** The Department has the discretion to reject all applications or cancel the RFA, at any time prior to the time an agreement is fully executed, when it is in the best interests of the Commonwealth. The reasons for the rejection or cancellation shall be made part of the RFA file.

PART III

TECHNICAL SUBMITTAL

III-1. Statement of the Project. State in succinct terms your understanding of the Project and the service required by this RFA. The Applicant's response should demonstrate that the Applicant fully understands the scope of services to be provided, the Applicant's responsibilities, and how the Applicant will effectively manage the grant.

Applicant Response

III-2. Qualifications.

A. Company Overview. The Applicant should describe the corporate history and relevant experience of the Applicant. This section must detail information on the ownership of the company (names and percent of ownership), the date the company was established, the date the company began operations, the physical location of the company, and the current size of the company. The Applicant should provide a corporate organizational chart.

The Applicant should describe its corporate identity, legal status and forms, including the name, address, telephone number, and email address for the legal entity that is submitting the application. In addition, the Applicant should provide the name of the principal officers, a description of its major services, and describe or provide a copy of any specific licenses or accreditations held by anyone within their organization which may be related to the project.

Applicants should provide similar organizational background information on any significant subcontractor for services. A "significant subcontractor" is defined as an organization undertaking more than 10% on the total cost basis of the work associated with this RFA.

If an Applicant is proposing to use the services or products of a subsidiary or affiliated firm, the Applicant should describe the business arrangement with that entity and the scope of the services the entity will provide.

If the experience of any proposed subcontractor is being used to meet the qualifications and requirements of this RFA, the Applicant should provide the same information as listed above for the subcontractor. This information must be presented separately within this section, clearly identifying the subcontractor experience and name of the subcontractor.

Applicant may provide up to three letters of support as an Appendix to their submittal.

Disclosure of cancellations or terminations. The Applicant should disclose any contract or agreement cancellations, or terminations within five years preceding the issuance of this RFA. If a contract or agreement was canceled or terminated for lack of performance, the Applicant must provide details on the customer's allegations, the Applicant's position relevant to the allegations, and the final resolution of the cancellation or the termination. The Applicant must include each customer's Company or entity name, address, contact name, phone number, and email address.

The Department may disqualify an Applicant based on a failure to disclose such a cancelled or terminated contract or agreement. If the Department learns about such a failure to disclose after an agreement is awarded, the Department may terminate the agreement.

Applicant Response

- B. Prior Experience.** The Applicant should include experience in working with target populations defined in **Part I, Section I-4.B** of this RFA, including any kind of outreach or relationship building experience, or experience with projects similar to this one. Describe qualifications for providing grant services and meeting objectives as outlined in **Part I, Section I-4** of this RFA. Experience should be work done by individuals who will be assigned to this Project as well as that of your organization. Studies or projects referred to should be identified and the name of the customer shown, including the name, address, and telephone number of the responsible official of the customer, company, or agency who may be contacted.

Applicant Response

- C. Personnel.** Include the number of executive and professional personnel, analysts, auditors, researchers, programmers, consultants, volunteers, etc., who will be engaged in the work. Applicants should identify where these personnel will be physically located during the time they are engaged in the Project and may reference the location for personnel that work at home or off-site as telework. Applicant should include position descriptions and minimum qualifications.

Submitted responses are not to include personal information that will, or will be likely to, require redaction to release of the application under the Pennsylvania Right-to-Know Law, including but not limited to home addresses and phone numbers, Social Security Numbers, driver's license numbers or numbers from state identification cards issued in lieu of a driver's license, and financial account numbers. If the Commonwealth requires any of this information for security validation or other purposes, the information will be requested separately and as necessary.

Applicant Response

- D. Subcontractors and Subgrantees.** If there will be no subcontractors or subgrantees, state that in the response section. Otherwise, provide a subcontracting plan for all subgrantees and subcontractors who will be assigned to the Project. Briefly explain why these outreach services are being subcontracted or sub-granted. The selected Applicant is prohibited from subcontracting or outsourcing any part of this Project without the express written approval of the Commonwealth. Upon award of the grant agreement, subgrantees and subcontractors included in the application submission are approved. For each position or agency included in your subcontracting plan provide:

1. Name of subgrantee or subcontractor;
2. Address of subgrantee or subcontractor;
3. Primary contact name, email address and phone number;
4. Type of organization and proof of nonprofit status;
5. Date of formation;
6. Number of years worked with the subgrantee or subcontractor;
7. Number of employees by job category to work on this Project;
8. Description of services to be performed;
9. What percentage of time the staff will be dedicated to this Project; and
10. Geographical location of staff.

Applicant Response

III-3. Work Plan. Describe in narrative form your technical plan for accomplishing the work with the Project tasks and the major milestones and deliverables provided below as a reference point. Modifications of tasks are permitted; however, reasons for changes should be fully explained. Include any additional information, if any, you believe is necessary to demonstrate your ability to perform the grant activities.

The Applicant should describe its management approach, including how it will implement its proposed work plan. Where applicable, the Applicant should provide specific examples of methodologies or approaches, including monitoring approaches, it will use to fulfill the RFA requirements and examples of similar experience and approach on comparable projects. The Applicant should describe the management and monitoring controls it will use to achieve the required quality of services and all performance requirements. The Applicant should also address its approach to internally monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of meeting the agreement requirements.

The Applicant should be including in the work plan its planned approach and process for establishing and maintaining communication between all parties and a technical approach that is aligned with all written specifications and requirements contained in the RFA.

Applicants may submit the Work Plan as part of the body of the application or may submit as an attachment with reference made in the body of the application.

Tasks.

- A.** Selected Applicants shall provide information to the public and to potential SNAP applicants regarding the availability of SNAP benefits, management of SNAP benefits, and how SNAP benefits can keep individuals healthy.
- B.** Selected Applicants shall provide targeted outreach to Priority Populations. This may include attending community events, hanging flyers, developing partnerships with other organizations who provide different services to the same Priority Population communities, sending letters, making phone calls, or other novel ways of reaching Priority Populations and communicating the benefits of SNAP to them. Selected Applicants must select at least one Priority Population as outlined in **Part I, Section I-4.B** of this RFA to provide targeted outreach. Selected Applicants may propose to provide outreach to more than one Priority Population and to other populations not mentioned, but must propose outreach to at least one Priority Population. Applicants must demonstrate how they will provide outreach to these populations, as well as any others who will be served, within their application.
- C.** Selected Applicants shall pre-screen households for potential SNAP eligibility.
- D.** Selected Applicants shall assist household with completing applications for SNAP, using COMPASS as the primary process for submission, and shall obtain necessary verifications and providing the verification to the County Assistance Office (“CAO”). As part of this assistance, selected Applicants shall direct the individuals to the section of the COMPASS application relating to voter registration to comply with terms of National Voters Registration Act of 1993, 52 U.S.C. 205, et seq.
- E.** Selected Applicants will be assigned a unique provider number and must track COMPASS applications using their provider number. Selected Applicants must track the case outcome of households for which it has provided assistance in applying for SNAP and document the successful completion of the process.
- F.** Selected Applicants shall collaborate with the local CAO to remove obstacles to SNAP participation, including any necessary follow-up regarding denied applications.
- G.** Selected Applicants shall develop an evaluation plan that will track outreach activities.

- H. Selected Applicants shall identify reasons why potentially eligible households choose not to apply for SNAP or end up not receiving SNAP.
- I. Selected Applicants shall provide SNAP eligibility information and distribute SNAP literature ([FNS313 SNAP Brochure](#)) in both English and Spanish.
- J. Selected Applicants must display the “And Justice For All” poster ([Publication AD-475B](#)) in all offices or locations where SNAP outreach is being conducted.
- K. If the Applicant develops written materials besides the FNS 313 Brochure and the And Justice For All poster described above to perform outreach, the selected Applicant shall provide these developed materials to the Department for review and approval, prior to use.

Applicant Response

III-4. Requirements. Within the scope of the application, the Applicant must demonstrate or identify how it will adhere to the following requirements.

- A. **Regulations.** Selected Applicants shall comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352), section 11(c) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-135), and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-112, sec. 504) and all requirements imposed by the regulations issued pursuant to these Acts by Department of Agriculture to the effect that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subject to discrimination under SNAP.

Selected Applicants must comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C §701 and may not exclude an individual from receiving program services based on the individual’s disability.

Selected Applicants must comply with the terms of National Voters Registration Act of 1993.52 U.S.C 205, et seq.

Applicant Response

- B. **Record Retention.** The selected Applicant must establish and maintain all files in an accurate, secure, and confidential manner and for the required period of time, as mandated by applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations. Client information that is not in active use, must be stored in a secure manner. Stored hard copy files must be kept in a dry, secure location and marked such that client information can be easily retrieved if necessary. Unless otherwise directed, the selected Applicant must store all referral related materials for a minimum of five years from when services were rendered to the individual. When disposing of client-related information, the documents must be destroyed properly. Applicants shall provide a copy of, or a detailed description of, their record retention policy.

Applicant Response

- C. **Confidentiality of Information and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (“HIPAA”) of 1996, Pub. L. 104-191, and accompanying regulations.** The selected Applicant shall comply with all federal and state laws, regulations, and requirements related to the use and disclosure of information, including information that constitutes Protected Health Information (“PHI”) as defined by HIPAA. The selected Applicant shall comply with the Business Associate Addendum, **Rider 6**

Applicant Response

D. Lobbying Certification and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities. This Project will be funded, in whole or in part, with federal monies. Public Law 101-121, Section 319, prohibits federal funds from being expended by the recipient or by any lower tier sub-recipients of a federal contract, grant, loan, or a cooperative agreement to pay any person for influencing, or attempting to influence a federal agency or Congress in connection with the awarding of any federal contract, the making of any federal grant or loan, or entering into any cooperative agreement. All parties who submit applications in response to this RFA must sign the **Lobbying Certification Form**, attached as **Attachment L**, and complete the **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities Form**, also attached as **Attachment L**.

Applicant Response

E. Worker Protection and Investment. Pursuant to Executive Order 2021-06, *Worker Protection and Investment* (October 21, 2021), the Commonwealth is responsible for ensuring that every Pennsylvania worker has a safe and healthy work environment and the protections afforded them through labor laws. To that end, contractors and grantees of the Commonwealth must certify that they are in compliance with all applicable Pennsylvania state labor and workforce safety laws. Such certification shall be made through the Worker Protection and Investment Certification Form (BOP-2201) and submitted with the bid, proposal or quote. This form is attached as **Attachment W**.

Applicant Response

F. The Applicant must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Applicants must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Applicants should include with their Application background on their nonprofit status and provide documentation to support their organization's current nonprofit status and 501(c)(3) status. Applicants may provide as supportive documentation, verification from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service or the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Non-Profit Articles of Incorporation, which demonstrates the Applicant's 501(c)(3) status.

Applicant Response

III-5. Project Narrative, consisting of:

A. Applicant Qualifications. Applicants shall provide the following information.

1. Describe your organization and mission.
2. What is your role in the community?
3. How long have you been serving the community?
4. How many employees, interns, and volunteers work for your organization and how many people will be dedicated to working on this Project?
5. Describe your prior experience working with the identified Priority Populations and projects similar to this RFA.
6. What are your qualifications for providing the grant services as described in this RFA?
7. Identify the service region (as listed in **Appendix D**) and which county or counties you will serve and describe the extent of need in the identified region and county or counties. How many potentially eligible SNAP recipients live in the area to be served? How many residents fall under Priority Populations? What are the poverty rates in the proposed service region?

Applicant Response

B. Project Activities and Requirements. Applicants shall provide the following information.

1. Describe the population(s) you will outreach and the methods of outreach to be used for each population. Applicants must include at least one Priority Population.
2. Describe how you will work in collaboration with other community resources and agencies to increase participation in SNAP. Describe the roles and activities your community partners, contractors, or sub-grantees will perform.
3. Describe how your project will increase participation in and public awareness of SNAP and the message that SNAP benefits are important and accessible. Describe all outreach materials that will be used, to include the FNS 313 brochure and a display of the AD-475B poster.
4. Describe how your organization will pre-screen households for potential SNAP eligibility.
5. Describe how your organization will assist households interested in SNAP with completing the COMPASS application, provide necessary verification to the CAO, and follow through with the application process for SNAP.
6. Describe how potentially eligible households will be pre-screened for SNAP benefits. Identify how many potentially eligible households do you plan to assist with application submissions? Of the identified households, how many do you anticipate will submit the application through COMPASS?
7. Describe how your organization will meet the required standards with regard to the National Voters Registration Act of 1993.
8. Describe how your organization will meet the required standards with regard to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, section 11 (c) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as described in **Part III, Section III-4.A.**

Applicant Response

C. Program Outcomes and Evaluation. Applicants shall provide the following information.

1. Describe how your organization will track the outcome of SNAP applications that are submitted by your organization and document the completion of the process.
2. Describe in broad categories how your organization will identify and document the reasons why eligible households might not receive SNAP benefits for applications your project submitted. Describe how your organization will document and identify the reasons why potentially eligible individuals chose not to pre-screen or to apply. How will you use this information to improve your outreach?
3. Describe how the project will be evaluated. Include a data collection and analysis plan, and a plan for corrective action. Applicants should describe how they will collect data relevant to applications, how they will use that data to better understand targeted groups, and how they will use this information to improve outreach. Applicants should describe how they will monitor their performance to ensure they are meeting project requirements, and describe what steps they will take if they discover they are not meeting a requirement. Applicants should also explain how their evaluation plan will track how many people are reached by the outreach activities and how many applicants were certified or denied for SNAP benefits.
4. Describe your plan for monitoring and tracking progress of grant activities, including a plan for corrective action.
5. Explain how you will monitor grant spending. How will you ensure grant funds are being used appropriately? If a particular activity is not achieving the expected results, how will you adjust?

6. Describe your plan to track both paper applications and COMPASS applications. Applicants are encouraged to use COMPASS.

Applicant Response

III-6. Reports and Project Control. The selected Applicant must timely and accurately submit all required reports to document provided services and activities. The Department may consider the failure to submit this information within the required timeframes or failure to provide additional information as required as a default of the agreement, which may result in the termination of the selected Applicant's grant agreement. Applicants should demonstrate or identify how they will adhere to the requirements.

- A. Quarterly Progress Reports.** A template for this report will be provided to selected Applicants. Information to be provided shall, at a minimum, consist of the following: the number of pre-screenings and applications submitted, a breakdown of application referrals, a description of SNAP outreach activities for the quarter, any deficiencies noted and any corrective action plans developed. Selected Applicants shall submit these reports to the DHS Grant Administrator within 30 calendar days after the end of each quarter of the Federal Fiscal Year. The first quarter runs from October 1 through December 31. The second quarter runs January 1 through March 31. The third quarter runs April 1 through June 30. The fourth quarter runs July 1 through September 30.
- B. Quarterly Expenditure Reports.** A template for this report will be provided to selected Applicants. This report must include the actual expenses incurred for the quarter, broken down by line item. Supporting documentation must be maintained and may be requested for occasional audits by DHS. Selected Applicants shall submit this Quarterly Expenditure Report to the DHS Grant Administrator within 30 calendar days after the end of each quarter of the Federal Fiscal Year, as described in III-6 A.
- C. Ad Hoc Reports.** The selected Applicant must provide additional reports when requested and directed by DHS.
- D. Quarterly or Ad Hoc Meetings.** The selected Applicant must participate in quarterly, or as scheduled, virtual meetings with the Department and other selected Applicants to discuss best practices, policy areas of concern or confusion, and brainstorm new ideas. Selected Applicants must participate in any on-site monitoring or reviews as scheduled by the Department.

Applicant Response

PART IV
COST SUBMITTAL

IV-1. Cost Submittal. The information requested in this **Part IV** shall constitute the Cost Submittal. The Cost Submittal shall be included in the Technical Submittal.

The total proposed cost should be broken down into the components set forth in **Rider 3 – Budget**. Applicants should **not** include any assumptions in their cost submittals. If the Applicant includes assumptions in its Cost Submittal, the Department may reject the application. Applicant’s proposed budget should be fair and reasonable to suit their project. The costs must be directly related to the project and must be allowable, reasonable, and necessary in order to be covered. Applicants should direct in writing to the Issuing Officer pursuant to **Part I, Section I-9** any questions about whether a cost or other component is included or applies. All Applicants will then have the benefit of the Department’s written answer so that all applications are submitted on the same basis.

Per Rider 5, the selected Applicant’s travel, lodging or meals under this contract shall be at or below the state rates outlined in Management Directive 230.10. The selected Applicant is not required to utilize the Commonwealth’s online booking tools or other resources. The selected Applicant is not required to use a specific card but should maintain itemized receipts for all associated costs.

Applicants with SNAP-ED funding are eligible to apply for this RFA, but must keep the SNAP-ED funding separate from this RFA Project. Selected Applicants may use private grant funding which does not originate from another Federal source.

Private Match Funding. This grant is 50% Federally reimbursed through SNAP Administrative funding. The Commonwealth has a limited pool of funding available to match the 50% Federal reimbursement. Private Match funding can be used in place of or to supplement Commonwealth funds and is desired, if possible, to expand outreach opportunities to as many agencies as possible. Private Match funding may not be from another Federal source.

As part of your response, Applicants shall provide the following:

- Will your agency be able to provide Private Match funding?
- If so, what percentage (up to 50 percent) of the overall budget for this project will be Private Match funding?
- Describe the sources of your Private Match funding and affirm that no Private Match funding comes from another federal source.

Applicant Response

The Department will reimburse the selected Applicant for work satisfactorily performed after execution of a written agreement and the Effective Date of the grant agreement, in accordance with agreement requirements.